



Feral Swine Regulations

Why does the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) care about feral swine?

The Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) is concerned feral swine carry diseases that pose a threat to domestic swine, cattle, humans, and other species. Historical test data indicates that about 10 percent of feral swine are infected with Swine Brucellosis, a disease that affects cattle and occasionally humans. Approximately 20 percent of feral swine may be infected with Pseudorabies (PRV) unrelated to rabies, but causes illness in hogs and affect market ability of domestic swine.



In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature provided that the TAHC regulate the movement of live feral swine as a measure to control the spread of disease. The TAHC subsequently passed rules that allow feral swine to be captured and sold for slaughter, while still protecting domestic swine and other livestock from the disease risks posed by these animals. TAHC rules also allow wild boars and barrows (castrated males) to be moved to TAHC pre-approved hunting preserves for hunting purposes. Female swine (sows and gilts) are not allowed to be moved to hunting preserves. Feral swine can not legally be sold through a livestock market.

Texas has approximately three million feral swine and the largest population of feral swine of any state in the U.S. This poses an ongoing threat to domestic swine across the state. Although there are provisions for “domesticating” feral swine for production by quarantine and testing after capture, this practice is not encouraged.

Does the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) regulate feral swine hunting?

Yes, the TPWD regulates the hunting of feral swine and the TAHC regulates the movement of live feral swine. Sport hunters must have a hunting lease license issued by TPWD to hunt wild hogs. The TPWD requires the registration of land where persons pay to hunt feral swine. Wild boars captured alive and moved under TAHC authority can only go to a hunting facility that is also permitted by TPWD. If a hunting ranch does NOT receive or release live wild hogs onto the property, the TAHC feral swine regulations do not apply to the hunting operation.

When do the TAHC regulations apply?

The TAHC's regulations apply when LIVE feral swine are to be moved from the premises where they were trapped or captured. While awaiting transport to slaughter or a holding facility, the feral swine may be held in escape proof pens on the premise of origin, or when an escape-proof cage on the vehicle or trailer that transported them from their original premise, or held within the transport trailer itself for as long as 7 days.

Approved Holding Facilities

Feral swine may be moved direct to slaughter or to an approved holding facility. TAHC approved holding facilities must have one good fence and are intended to temporarily hold feral swine until animals can be assembled for shipping to slaughter. Holding facilities must be constructed at least 200 yards from domestic swine pens, and be inspected by the TAHC.



Allowing feral swine to escape from an approved holding facility, or the failure to maintain records, can lead to a penalty for violation of the rule and suspension or revocation of the approved holding facility status.

There are over 100 feral swine facilities approved in Texas. To determine the location of the nearest facility, or to apply to become a TAHC approved facility; contact the closest TAC region office or the TAHC headquarters at 1-800-550-8242. There is no fee for applying to become a facility owner or operator.

Hunting Preserves

Only boars and barrows may be moved to a hunting preserve. Prior to being released, swine must have individual identification approved by the TAHC. Feral swine being hauled to slaughter from the holding facility do NOT need to be individually identified.

As with the holding facility hunting preserve fences must be kept in good repair to prevent the escape of feral swine. A hunting preserve may lose its TAHC authorization if escaped wild swine are detected outside the preserve fences.

Authorized hunting preserves must be approved and inspected by TAHC personnel prior to approval. Applications may be obtained by contacting the nearest TAHC office. A map and contact information of statewide TAHC offices can be found on the agency website at <http://www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/contact.html>. A current copy of the TPWD hunting lease license will also be required for TAHC approval.

Record Keeping

Records must be maintained which include the date and number of feral swine being placed into and/or removed from a holding facility or hunting preserve. The description of the animals, any identification devices and where the animals were trapped must also be recorded. Those records are to be kept by the facility operator and made available upon request for inspection by TAHC personnel.

Requirements for Feeding Feral Swine

Feral swine are to only be fed until transportation is arranged for delivery to slaughter or a holding facility, or for fattening on the premise of origin for personal consumption. To prevent potential disease transmission, practice good biosecurity.

Is there a penalty for disregarding the feral swine regulations?

The TAHC makes every attempt to obtain compliance by providing information and sound reasoning for protecting livestock herds. However, the rules include both criminal and administrative penalties, which may be imposed for violations. The text of the TAHC website at www.tahc.texas.gov.

The TAHC feral swine regulations are based on Sections 161.0412 and 161.1375 of the Texas Agriculture Code. Noncompliance with the movement requirements is a Class C misdemeanor and repeat offenses are a Class B misdemeanor. Alternatively, the TAHC may also address noncompliance through an administrative hearing process.

**Information provided by
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